

Statistics Weekly

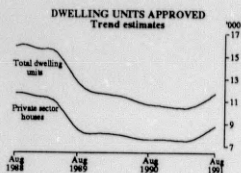
Thursday, 10 October 1991

The week in statistics ...

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Housing approvals trend still moving upwards

The number of total dwelling units approved in August 1991 fell by 1.2 per cent in seasonally adjusted terms. The private sector house component decreased by 0.9 per cent. However, building approvals data are prone to volatility on a month to month basis and while the latest data show a slight fall from July to August 1991, the trend series for both total dwelling units and private sector house approvals continue to show signs of strengthening, and confirm the turning point that occurred in February 1991.



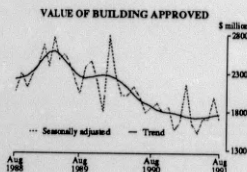
DWELLING UNITS APPROVED, AUGUST 1991

	Number	Percentage change	
		From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Private sector houses —			
Original	9,113	-4.3	14.3
Seasonally adjusted	8,937	-0.9	17.4
Trend estimate	8,756	3.4	15.3
Total dwelling units —			
Original	12,287	-3.6	7.6
Seasonally adjusted	11,883	-1.2	10.2
Trend estimate	11,655	2.6	9.1

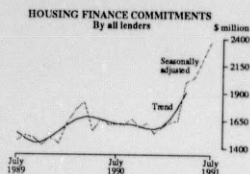
The seasonally adjusted value of total building approved (residential and non-residential) fell by 14.5 per cent to \$1,700.0 million from July to August 1991 and was 8.3 per cent lower than the August 1990 estimate.

The trend estimates for the value of new residential building approved continue to show signs of upward movement with the release of August 1991 estimates. Trend estimates for the value of non-residential building approved are only available to May 1991 and continued the decline evident since January 1990. As a result of these opposite movements, the trend in the total value of building approved is showing very weak growth.

VALUE OF BUILDING APPROVED, AUGUST 1991



	\$ million	Percentage change	
		From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
New residential building —			
Original	974.8	-5.9	8.0
Seasonally adjusted	963.0	-1.3	10.6
Trend estimate	943.2	3.0	9.5
Total building —			
Original	1,789.1	-6.2	-12.1
Seasonally adjusted	1,700.0	-14.5	-8.3
Trend estimate	1,761.6	0.4	-5.8



Home lending now nearly 50% above last year's level

Seasonally adjusted housing finance commitments for July 1991 (including alterations and additions) totalled \$2367.8 million, an increase of \$167.7 million (7.6%) over June 1991 and an increase of \$749.4 million (46.3%) over July 1990. This was the seventh successive monthly increase in lending commitments.

Greater lending by banks, up \$172.2 million (10.4%) and other lenders, up \$13.3 million (5.6%), produced the latest overall increase despite a \$17.8 million (5.7%) fall in commitments by permanent building societies.

HOUSING FINANCE COMMITMENTS
Excluding alterations and additions
JULY 1991

	\$ million	Percentage change	
		From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Type of lender — seasonally adjusted			
All banks	1822.1	10.4	50.8
Permanent building societies	295.4	-5.7	52.5
Other lenders	250.3	5.6	15.6
Total	2,367.8	7.6	46.3
States — original			
New South Wales	882.4	22.2	63.9
Victoria	557.5	15.8	56.7
Queensland	444.3	19.5	68.0
South Australia	176.4	20.7	39.2
Western Australia	233.2	23.9	71.1
Tasmania	40.2	11.4	78.7
Northern Territory	13.5	36.4	60.7
Australian Capital Territory	57.1	13.7	77.3
Australia	2,404.7	19.9	62.0

Seasonally adjusted, finance was provided for 32,286 dwelling units, 2,419 dwelling units (8.1%) more than in June 1991 and 8,546 dwelling units (36%) more than in July 1990.

Two features of the July statistics (unadjusted) were:

- Re-financing, recorded separately for the first time, contributed \$103 million (4.3%) of total new housing commitments (excluding alterations and additions) for July 1991.
- The average size of loans financed in July 1991 was just under \$73,000 compared with just under \$68,000 in July 1990.

For further information, order the publication *Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia (5609.0)*, or contact Ms Abha Bedi on (06) 252 7117 or John Carson on (06) 252 7110.

'No vacancies at all' still major difficulty for unemployed

The belief that there were 'no vacancies at all' continues to be the dominant reported difficulty experienced by unemployed persons in finding work. Of the 740,100 persons looking for work in June 1991, 33 per cent gave this as the main difficulty in finding work compared with 17 per cent in July 1990. Their average duration of unemployment was 35 weeks.

The reason 'no vacancies in line of work', given by 18 per cent of all unemployed persons, has displaced 'considered too young or too old by employers' as the next most common difficulty in finding work. The 'too young or too old' problem has declined from 15 per cent in July 1990 to 12 per cent in June 1991.

These findings are among the results of an Australian Bureau of Statistics survey conducted in June 1991.

MAIN DIFFICULTIES IN FINDING WORK
Per cent

Difficulty	July 1982	July 1990	June 1991
No vacancies at all	27	17	33
No vacancies in line of work	16	15	18
Considered too young/too old	15	15	12
Lacked necessary skills/education	7	13	9
Other	34	40	28
Total	100	100	100

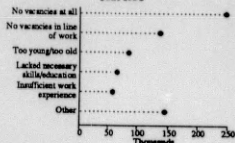
The survey also showed:

- ☐ The percentage of unemployed persons reporting 'lacked necessary skills/education' or 'insufficient work experience' as their main difficulty in finding work decreased with age, from 24 per cent of those aged 15 to 19 years to 4 per cent of those aged 45 years and over.
- ☐ Some 55 per cent of the 86,500 persons who reported their main difficulty in finding work as 'considered too young or too old by employers' were aged 45 and over.
- ☐ 79 per cent of unemployed persons were registered with the Commonwealth Employment Service (CES), of whom more than 9 in 10 were looking for full-time work.
- ☐ Persons without post-school qualifications had been unemployed for 11 weeks more on average than those with post-school qualifications (49 compared with 38 weeks).
- ☐ 25 per cent of unemployed persons had been unemployed for one year or more.

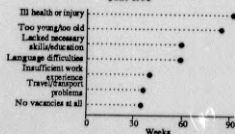
Overall, the average duration of current period of unemployment was 44 weeks, compared with 47 weeks in July 1990. This fall reflects the sharp increase in the number of unemployed persons in the past 12 months.

For further information, order the publication *Job Search Experience of Unemployed Persons, Australia (6222.0)*, or contact Sue Doyle on (06) 252 7204.

MAIN DIFFICULTY IN FINDING WORK
June 1991

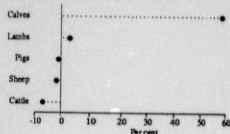


AVERAGE DURATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT
By selected main difficulties in finding work
June 1991



Veal production still low despite August increase

LIVESTOCK SLAUGHTERED
Change July 1991 to August 1991



The slaughtering of calves for August 1991 showed a substantial rise of 59 per cent when compared with July 1991. As a result, veal production for August 1991 (4,582 tonnes) increased by 26 per cent when compared with July 1991. However, August 1991 veal production was 21 per cent below the figure for August 1990, reflecting a decrease of 27 per cent in the number of calves slaughtered. Only marginal changes occurred in other slaughtering categories for August 1991 over July 1991.

LIVESTOCK SLAUGHTERED, AUGUST 1991
Percentage change

	From previous month	From corresponding month of previous year
Cattle	-7.1	-1.2
Pigs	-1.3	-1.4
Lamb	3.3	-8.8
Sheep	-1.9	-11.4
Calves	58.7	-27.1

Wool receipts by brokers and dealers in (original terms), rose in all States for August 1991 over July 1991. The largest increase was in Western Australia where receipts rose from 10,095 tonnes to 25,026 tonnes, an increase of 148 per cent. This followed low activity in May and June. The total receipts of taxable wool by brokers and dealers for August 1991 when compared with August 1990 showed a decrease of 18 per cent.

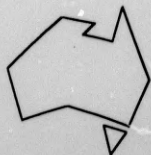
For further information, order the publication *Livestock Products, Australia* (7215.0), or contact Marion Long on (06) 252 5337.

New version of geographical classification manual

A revised edition of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) Manual has been released. The ASGC is an Australia-wide system for the classification of statistical units, such as households and establishment locations, by geographic areas.

Edition 2.1 outlines the spatial units used for the collection and dissemination of data from the 1991 Census of Population and Housing as well as other 1991 ABS collections. It incorporates all the ASGC structures relevant as at 1 January 1991, including the Census Collection District (CD) components of Statistical Local Areas (SLAs). Also included is a key to all ASGC spatial unit changes since July 1984, and a listing of Community Government Councils in the Northern Territory together with their component CDs.

ASGC



Inquiries

The ABS supplies a wide range of statistical information:

- ☐ through its bookshops
- ☐ by mail order (including subscription)
- ☐ by facsimile
- ☐ electronically.

To order any of the publications that appear in *Statistics Weekly* or to inquire about the statistics and services available from the ABS, contact Information Services at any of the offices listed below. An Information Consultancy Service in each office provides assistance of a more extensive or complex nature.

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NT (089) 81 3456

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To subscribe to *Statistics Weekly* or any other ABS printed publication, phone the ABS Subscription Service toll-free on (088) 020608, or contact Information Services at any of the offices above.

Suggestions

Any suggestions for improvement to this publication should be addressed to:

Robert Nixon
Editor
Statistics Weekly
(06) 252 6104

Statistics Weekly
10 October 1991

This latest edition of the ASGC reflects new delimitation criteria for some spatial units and incorporates changes made as a result of the Review of Statistical Geography which was completed in 1990. Significant changes include the alteration of the Statistical Division boundaries of Melbourne, Brisbane and Darwin and revised Statistical Districts, Statistical Subdivisions and SLAs in Victoria and Queensland.

Edition 2.1 also has a 'new look' cover, a revised format and a new edition numbering system, superseding the previous Edition 9. Associated products which will be particularly useful to users of Census data include a concordance between Census 86 and Census 91 ASGC codes, listings of codes and labels for all ASGC structures, the National Localities Index, and customised ASGC code to postcode concordances. These products are all available in electronic format.

For further information, order the publication *Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC)* (1216.0), or contact Beverly Fogarty on (06) 252 5888.

All the week's releases: 2 to 8 October

General

Publications Advice, 4 October 1991 (1105.0; free)
Publications Advice, 8 October 1991 (1105.0; free)
Statistics Weekly, 3 October 1991 (1318.0; \$4.00)
Cause of Death Certification, Vic., October 1991 (1205.2; \$5.00)

Demography

Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Aust., June 1991 (3401.0; \$6.00)

National accounts, finance and foreign trade

Foreign Trade, Aust., Merchandise Imports, August 1991 (5433.0; \$9.00)
Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Aust., July 1991 (5609.0; \$10.00)
Public Unit Trusts, Aust., June Qtr 1991 (5645.0; \$9.00)

Labour statistics and prices

Employed Wage and Salary Earners, Aust., March Qtr 1991 (6248.0; \$14.50)
The Labour Force, Qld, August 1991 (6201.3; \$14.50)

Agriculture

Livestock Products, Aust., August 1991 (7215.0; \$7.00)
Selected Agricultural Commodities, Qld, 1990-91, Preliminary (7112.3; \$10.00)

Secondary industry and distribution

Manufacturing Production, Aust.: Clothing and Footwear, July 1991 (8358.0; \$10.00)

Manufacturing Production, Aust.: Food, Drink, Tobacco, Stock and Poultry Food, July 1991 (8359.0; \$10.00)

Sales of Australian Wine and Brandy by Winemakers, August 1991 (8504.0; \$10.00)

Building Approvals, Aust., August 1991 (8731.0; \$12.50)

Tourist Accommodation, NSW, June Qtr 1991 (8635.1; \$10.00)

Building Approvals, Vic., August 1991 (8731.2; \$10.00)

Tourist Accommodation, WA, June Qtr 1991 (8635.5; \$10.00)

Tourist Accommodation, SA, June Qtr 1991 (8635.4; \$10.00)

Building Activity, NT, June Qtr 1991 (8752.7; \$8.00)

Continued ...

Transport

Replacement publication: Interstate Road Freight Movement, Aust., June Qtr 1991 (9214.0; \$5.50)

Motor Vehicle Registrations, Vic., August 1991 (9303.2; \$10.00)

Calendar of key releases

Expected releases over the fortnight to 22 October 1991

October

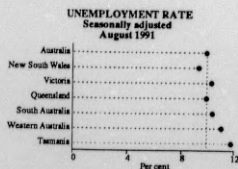
- 10** The Labour Force, Australia, September 1991, Preliminary (6202.0; \$10.00)
The Labour Force, Australia — Preliminary Data on Floppy Disk, September 1991 (6271.0; \$65.00)
- 11** Retail Trade, Australia, August 1991 (8501.0; \$10.00)
- 21** Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia, August 1991 (5609.0; \$10.00)
- 22** Export Price Index, Australia, August 1991 (6405.0; \$7.50)

The latest ...

Changes to key State indicators — consolidated to 8 October 1991

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
— Percentage change from same period previous year —									
New capital expenditure (Mar. qtr 91)*	-8.4	-22.7	0	-8.9	-7.0	-16.9	n.a.	n.a.	-10.2
Retail turnover (July 91)	2.4	1.0	2.5	5.8	2.6	4.1	n.a.	8.4	2.4
New motor vehicle registrations (Aug. 91)† (a)	-3.1	-22.3	-11.2	-25.4	-15.3	-28.0	-27.9	19.3	-12.4
Number of dwelling unit approvals (Aug. 91)	8.6	-6.8	7.6	3.1	19.6	41.3	21.7	36.5	7.6
Value of total building work done (Mar. qtr 91)	0.8	-30.2	-19.5	2.7	-23.2	-18.8	33.5	-4.2	-13.5
Employed persons (Aug. 91)*	-0.7	-4.9	-1.0	-3.4	-0.7	-1.9	7.7	2.3	-2.0
Capital city consumer price index (June qtr 91)	2.8	4.1	3.4	4.7	2.2	3.8	4.1	3.2	3.4
Average weekly earnings (full-time adult ordinary time) (May 91)	3.6	5.2	5.7	6.5	8.1	3.1	5.8	5.6	5.0
Population (Dec. 90)	1.1	1.3	2.3	1.1	2.2	1.1	1.2	2.5	1.5
Room nights in licensed hotels and motels, etc (Mar. qtr 91)	0.0	-1.9	-0.9	-6.4	-1.2	7.7	0.2	14.5	-0.5

* Seasonally adjusted except for NT and ACT. † Seasonally adjusted except for Tas., NT and ACT.
(a) Refer to footnote (c) on next page.



The latest ...

8

Key national indicators – consolidated to 8 October 1991

		Latest figure available		Percentage change (a) on			
		Period	Original	Seasonally adjusted	Previous period	Corresponding period last year	
National production							
Gross domestic product	— current prices	\$m	June qtr 91	92,362	93,956	-1.2	-1.2
	— 1984-85 prices			62,148	63,912	-1.0	-2.1
Industrial activity							
New capital expenditure	— current prices	\$m	June qtr 91	6,304	6,011	-8.9	-13.4
	— 1984-85 prices			4,808	4,577	-8.2	-13.4
Expected new capital expenditure		"	Six months to Dec. 91	12,756	n.a.		-18.5
Retail turnover	— current prices	"	July 91	7,060.6	7,509.9	n.a.	-2.8
	— 1984-85 prices	"	June qtr 91	14,569.4	15,058.0	-1.0	-2.2
New motor vehicle registrations (e)		no.	August 91	42,400	42,227	-1.3	-12.4
Dwelling unit approvals		"	August 91	12,287	11,883	1.2	10.2
Value of all building approvals		\$m		1,789	1,700	-14.5	-8.4
Value of total building work done	— current prices	"	Mar. qtr 91	6,021	6,653	-5.1	-12.0
	— 1984-85 prices	"		3,789	4,112	-6.9	-15.0
Manufacturers' sales	— current prices	"	June qtr 91	33,638	33,765	-1.7	-3.7
	— 1984-85 prices	"		23,225	23,337	-1.8	-5.0
Expected manufacturers' sales		"	Six months to Dec. 91	71,691	n.a.	n.a.	-5.0
Labour							
Employed persons (f)		'000	Aug. 91	7,669.2	7,728.6	-1.4	-2.0
Unemployment rate † (f)		%	"	9.5	9.8	0.0	2.6
Participation rate † (f)		"	"	62.7	63.4	0.8	-0.6
Job vacancies		'000	Aug. 91	25.6	25.1	-2.1	-46.9
Average weekly overtime per employee		hours	"	1.07	1.11	-1.0	-12.2
Prices, profits and wages							
Consumer price index	1980-81 = 100.0		June qtr 91	214.4	n.a.	0.1	3.4
Price index of materials used in manufacturing industries	1984-85 = 100.0		July 91	120.4	n.a.	0.0	3.4
Price index of articles produced by manufacturing industry	1988-89 = 100.0		July 91	111.4	n.a.	0.2	2.6
Company profits before income tax		\$m	June qtr 91	2,469	2,697	7.4	-23.1
Average weekly earnings (Full-time adults; ordinary time)		\$	May 91	560.80	n.a.	-0.6	5.0
Interest rates (b) (monthly average)							
90-day bank bills †	% per annum		August 91	10.20	n.a.	0.10	-3.55
10-year Treasury bonds †			"	10.65	n.a.	-0.35	-2.85
Balance of payments							
Exports of merchandise		\$m	August 91	4,601	4,665	1.4	13.6
Imports of merchandise		"	"	3,937.9	3,715	-12.3	-10.2
Balance on merchandise trade (c)		"	"	622	950	160.3	n.a.
Balance of goods and services (c)		"	"	304	696	1,165.5	n.a.
Balance on current account (c)		"	"	-925	-575	47.0	60.5
Terms of trade (d)	1984-85 = 100.0		June qtr 91	n.a.	100.2	1.2	-5.2
Foreign investment							
Net foreign debt		\$m	30 June 91	130,314	n.a.	-2.4	2.9
Net foreign liabilities		"	"	176,625	n.a.	1.6	6.6
Exchange rates (monthly average)							
US\$	per \$A		August 91	0.7824	n.a.	1.5	-3.3
Trade weighted index	May 1970 = 100.0		"	60.4	n.a.	0.7	-1.6
Other indicators							
Population (resident at end of qtr)	million		Mar. 91	17.3	n.a.	0.4	1.5
Overseas visitor arrivals	'000		May 91	161	204	10.8	6.4

(a) Based on seasonally adjusted figures where available. (b) Source: Reserve Bank of Australia. (c) For percentage changes, a minus sign indicates an increase in the deficit; no sign means a decrease in the deficit or an increase in the surplus. (d) The ratio of the price of goods and services for exports to that for imports. (e) August 1991 is not strictly comparable with August 1990 due to the introduction by motor vehicle registration authorities of a more accurate identification and classification system. (f) Later figures expected to be released Thursday, 10 October 1991.
 NOTES: † = change is shown in terms of percentage points. n.a. = not available.
 Figures have been taken from a variety of ABS publications. Copies may be obtained from Information Services (see page 6).
 Some of the figures shown are preliminary, some final, and some are revisions of previously published figures. Users should check the latest relevant publication or with the ABS Information Services if the status of the statistic is important.

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